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ABSTRACT

"Empowered" teachers carefully consider the content of what is taught to children, are active in developing original curriculum based upon their own and/or their pupils' interests, and are able to creatively use materials, personal talents, and innovative resources in planning and implementing learning activities. This paper reports the findings of an interpretive field study of 10 "potentially empowered" elementary preservice teachers during their student teaching semester. After outlining the sampling procedures and research methods, a description is given of the "social world" within which these student teachers were placed, and the constraints they encountered. The political tactics and teaching strategies these teachers employed in response to this environment are presented. These included five distinctive tactics employed during their initiation into the teaching profession: (1) overt compliance during the first few weeks; (2) critical compliance; (3) accommodative resistance; (4) resistant alteration of instructional routine; and (5) transformative action and making individual curricular and instructional decisions. The idea of empowered teaching is examined in the light of the study's findings. Three pages of references and a list of informants' responses to the study are appended. (JD)

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The Socialization of Potentially Empowered Preservice Teachers: A Case Study and Theoretical Analysis

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Abstract

This paper reports the findings of an interpretive field study regarding the occupational socialization of potentially empowered preservice teachers. Using the methods of purposeful sampling ten informants were extensively observed and interviewed during their student teaching experience. The paper first describes the social environment within which these informants were placed. Second, it presents the political tactics and teaching strategies that these informants employed in response to this environment. Finally, it examines the notion of empowered teaching in light of the study's findings.

The Socialization of Potentially Empowered Preservice Teachers: A Case Study and Theoretical Analysis

In recent years, there have been several field studies that have explored various aspects concerning the professional socialization of novice teachers (e.g., Ball & Feiman-Nemser, 1986; Crow, 1985, 1986; Gibson, 1976; Goodman, 1985; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Lacey, 1977; O'Neal & Hoffman, 1984; Shulman, 1985; Tabachnick, Popkewitz, & Zeichner, 1979-80; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985). The findings of this research suggests that most beginning teachers are primarily concerned with "fitting into" the existing practices found in their student teaching field placements or inservice schools. For example, Tabachnick et al. (1979-80) and others have found that novice teachers learn to teach by participating in routine, mechanical instructional activities that required little creativity or thoughtfulness. Often, these individuals accepted standardized practices as the upper and outer limits of what was possible. Katz (1974) described this uncritical acceptance of school practices as "excessive realism." The knowledge systems that novice teachers confront, the way in which this knowledge is taught to children, and the pupils' responses (i.e., the activity of learning) tend to be reified. Few beginning teachers understand the socially constructed nature of school life; and as a result, Katz suggest that there is little, if any, searching for potential alternatives.

Although this research suggests that most preservice teachers' perspectives of teaching tend to be relatively narrow in scope, several of these studies have also indicated that there were a few individuals who did not follow this typical pattern (e.g., Goodman, 1985; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Lacey, 1977; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985). These preservice teachers seemed significantly more active and reflective about what it means to become a teacher than the majority of their colleagues. The above research suggests that these novices did not take traditional approaches towards education for granted, but thoughtfully inquired

into the merits of various teaching strategies, learning theories, and instructional resources. When possible, some of these individuals attempted to alter the established practices found in a given field placement. Recently, several educators (e.g., Giroux, 1985; Goodman, 1986; Kretovics, 1986; McNeil, 1986; Parker, 1986; Posner, 1985; Tom, 1984; Zeichner, 1981) have used the notion of "empowerment" to describe individuals who assume a more critical and personally active approach towards the teaching profession.[1] Empowered teachers carefully consider the content of what is taught to children, are active in developing original curriculum based upon their own and/or their pupils' interests, and are able to creatively use materials, personal talents, and innovative resources in planning and implementing learning activities. In particular, these individuals are committed to providing thoughtful and challenging educational experiences for children; thereby, encouraging their pupils to become empowered themselves. While this portrait of "empowered" teachers is thought provoking and, as the above research findings indicate, there are a few novice teachers who seem interested in becoming more "empowered," our knowledge of these individuals is still very limited. We know little about the way in which these potentially empowered novice teachers are socialized into their chosen profession. What type of environment do these people confront? In what way do these particular preservice teachers mediate their own educational beliefs with the institutional expectations found in their field placements? What does it mean to become an "empowered" teacher within today's public elementary schools?

In addressing the above concerns, this paper will report the findings of an interpretive field study of ten "potentially empowered" elementary preservice teachers during their student teaching semester. After outlining the sampling procedures and research methods, the paper will first describe the "social world" within which these preservice teachers were placed. Second, their responses to

this "world" will be portrayed. Third, the findings from this research will be used as a basis for crystallizing our notion of empowerment as this concept relates to teaching. Finally, implications from the study's findings for teacher education will be addressed.

Methodology

The rationale behind choosing one methodology over another is connected to the nature of the subject being studied and the underlying goal(s) of the research. Since this study explored the complex process of occupational socialization, a methodology that incorporated the existential experiences of the participants, themselves (i.e., their actions, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions), as a major focus for investigation and interpretation was necessary. As a result, the methods used to collect and analyze data were those associated with interpretive field studies (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1975; Hanson, 1975; Pelto & Pelto, 1979; Spradley, 1979).

Sample Selection

The sample was selected from students enrolled in an elementary teacher education program at a large Mid-western university. Given the previous description of those novice teachers who seemed reflective and active in their approach towards teaching (see page 2), and following the guidelines of purposeful sampling (Patton, 1980), a number of steps were taken to locate individuals who during their professional education showed promise of becoming "empowered teachers." During the semester prior to their student teaching semester, fifty three (53) students enrolled in an early field experience were asked to take the "Teacher Belief Inventory" [TBI] (Posner, 1985).[2] These questionnaires were analyzed in order to locate individuals who believed teachers should be active decision makers, who wanted to promote self discipline among children, who saw knowledge as open to questioning and tied to a particular source, who viewed

student diversity within a given classroom as an asset, who thought schools should be responsive to unique community needs, and who thought schools could play an important role in making our society (and the world) more humane. Based upon an analysis of these questionnaires, case history interviews were conducted with nineteen selected students in order to clarify particular answers on the TBI and to gain more insight into these students' attitudes.

Each of the original fifty three students were enrolled in a curriculum/methods course specifically designed to foster qualities and talents found in "empowered teachers."[3] To be successful in this course, preservice teachers had to produce unique curriculum content, resource materials, and activities on a given topic. Subsequently, they had to be highly motivated, resourceful, and persistent in their search for knowledge. They also had to be creative and reflective in using this knowledge as the basis for developing an original unit of study on their chosen topic. Preservice teachers who were chosen for this study were rated highly successful by the course instructor.

In addition, university supervisors who had observed these preservice teachers teach during their early field experience were interviewed to obtain their evaluations of these individuals' "creative potential" and level of motivation for teaching. Each of these preservice teachers had also taken a course, "Teaching as a Profession," which examined various social issues (e.g., sexism, racism, mainstreaming, discipline) as they relate to teaching. The instructors for this course were asked to give their assessment of these individuals' commitment to teaching and their ability and willingness to be reflective about educational issues.

As a result of their case history interviews, their work in the above courses, and commentary from university supervisors, ten preservice teachers were selected as the sample group. Follow-up interviews were conducted with these ten

informants to gain further insight into their educational beliefs and to verify our sample selection. All of those selected as informants had been successful in developing an original, substantive unit of study during their early field experience, and they expressed attitudes towards education described in our analysis of the TBI (see page 3). Each informant mentioned that they hoped they would be able to "try things out" during their student teaching and have an impact upon (rather than just fitting into) their field placement.

Methods for Data Collection

Observations and interviews (both formal and informal) were the two main methods of data collection. In addition, relevant program literature, public school guidelines, and informants' journals were reviewed. Data was recorded on audio tapes and in field notes.

Each informant was observed an average of once every two weeks during their student teaching. They were observed teaching different subjects, at different times of the day, and in a variety of settings (large group, small group, and individual instruction). The purpose of these observations was to discover what actually happened in these field placements. Rather than predetermining specific items to look for, a number of general questions were used to initially guide these observations: How was the classroom organized? What did informants do in their classrooms? What types of interpersonal dynamics existed between the informants and their pupils, other teachers, and administrative personnel? What was taught? What kinds of decisions did the informants make? What information, opinions, and/or beliefs were exchanged between these participants? After the first round of observations, more specific questions were developed from reviewing field notes and were used as the basis for future observations.

In-depth interviews (e.g., Bussis, Chittenden, & Amarel, 1976; Spradley, 1979) were conducted before and after each observation and during opportune

moments during the course of the school day (lunch, recess period, etc.).[4] Rather than predetermining specific questions, these interviews were initially structured around various areas of concern such as: a) perceptions of what happened within a given classroom; b) the benefits and problems encountered in their role as teachers, c) the rationale for making instructional decisions; and d) individual responses to the organizational structure, people, and events found within a given school and classroom. As field notes were analyzed, more specific questions emerged and were asked during subsequent interviews to gain deeper insight into situations and to clarify ambiguities. Interviews were designed to discover the way in which informants interpreted the social world around them, and the way these interpretations were used as the basis for their actions.

Analysis of Data

The "constant comparative" method of analysis was used as a guide for understanding the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1975; Goetz & LeCompte, 1981). Throughout the field work, interview and observation notes were reviewed daily. Incidents and bits of information were at first coded into tentative conceptual categories. As these categories emerged, questions arose that were used to guide further investigation into the field. The findings from these observations and interviews were then compared to the initial categories. Through this constant comparison of data, analytical categories crystallize. As this process continued, special attention was given to data that seem to challenge original conceptualizations (Erickson, 1973). This return to the data source, followed by modification and/or new generation of ideas, continued until the findings could be presented in some detail. Finally, the informants were given the opportunity to respond to the findings prior to writing a final draft (see Appendix A).

The Field Placements

As in most institutional settings, our informants entered a preexisting world

when place in a practicum site. This "world" had taken for granted customs, rules, belief systems, and behavior patterns that were, as Schein (1984: 10) notes in his analysis of institutional culture, "virtually undiscussable." Berger and Luckmann (1966: 59) state, "Institutions, by the very fact of their existence, control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct which control it in one direction as against many other directions that would theoretically be possible." These preservice teachers were particularly sensitive to the "on-going" pattern of life in their field placements in that they were starting their student teaching during the second semester of the school year. As they entered their practicum sites, they confronted both overt and covert forces that attempted to influence their behavior and attitudes.

Edwards (1979) identifies three forms of organizational control found within institutions. "Personal" control refers to supervisors who directly oversee the activities of workers and monitor their actions to ensure compliance with organizational norms. "Bureaucratic" control regulates workers activities through stated regulations and hierarchical relations. Finally, "technical" control influences the work of employees through the physical structure of the workplace, the types of tools required, and type of product that is produced. The forces of worker control found in these practicum sites were technical rather than bureaucratic or personal in nature. That is, the organizational structure of the schools was designed in such a way as to minimize the need for direct control over the labor process by supervisors or bureaucratic rules.

The most obvious manifestation of this technical control was the elementary curriculum which was predetermined and highly routinized when the preservice teachers arrived. The major subjects in the primary grades consisted of reading, English, math, and spelling. Each subject was conceptualized from a utilitarian, "skills development" perspective. For example, reading was not defined as a

wholistic activity that involved the children's imagination and their relationship to books, knowledge, or language. Instead, reading was taught as the summation of discrete phonics, comprehension, contextual and/or structural skills. Each skill was broken up into hundreds of sub-skills, stated in behavioral terms, and taught separately. English did not focus on the process of written and/or oral expression of ideas, but on grammatical rules. Spelling was organized into random groups of words based upon structural commonalties rather than emerging from a topic of study. These subjects dominated the school day. The study of any substantive content was almost non-existent in these primary grades. One informant was placed in a sixth grade class in which the major subjects included both science and social studies. However, when these subjects were taught at any grade level the emphasis was on teaching children specified facts from textbooks.

What was particularly significant about the elementary curriculum was that in addition to specifying the exact content of what was studied, the standard curriculum also largely determined the instructional procedures used to teach this content. During our initial observations, almost every lesson was taught using professionally developed "instructional programs." These programs came complete with specific learning objectives, step-by-step procedures, time schedules, and tests - all organized for the teacher's implementation. Instead of "instruction" being a thoughtful activity about what and how content should be taught to a particular group of children, "teaching" consisted primarily of managing mass produced instructional programs. For example, when asked about the types of teaching strategies used in her classroom, one of the cooperating teachers looked a bit confused (as if she didn't understand the question) and then stated, "In reading I stress four things- the skill pack, the study book, the reading chart, and reading the story" (interview with Ms. P). 5 The instruction most often observed in the practicum sites consisted of drilling and/or testing for pupil

"competency" of prespecified, short term facts and/or skills. The emphasis of most lessons was on having children read, memorize, and repeat "correct answers" as defined in the various "instructional programs" used in the school system. There seemed to be little demand to develop lessons that would encourage pupil problem-solving, self-directed learning and research, or thoughtful interpretation and expression of content. Teachers seemed to exert little control over either what or how subject matter would be taught. Most lessons involved routine and rather mechanistic types of instructional activities.

Although the "technical control" that was exerted through the standardized curriculum was impressive, there was also evidence that the schools in which our informants were placed reflected Weick's (1976) and Blumberg's (1980) notion of "loosely coupled systems." Once a teacher closed his/her door, s/he was able to assume a certain amount of autonomy. Cooperating teachers made several instructional decisions in areas that did not interfere with the standardized programs or where pressure to conform was weak. For example, some teachers expressed active support for the "skills development" approach to curriculum that was mandated by the school district, and they often gave their pupils extra worksheets to work on when they finished their assigned quota of workbook pages in a given day. However, other teachers were not as supportive and would try to find other things for pupils to do when they finished their daily workbook quota. For example, one cooperating teacher spent part of each day teaching individual or small series of lessons on various topics (e.g., clouds) that she felt would be of interest to her first and second graders. Ms. G., who taught sixth grade, began every day with a discussion of current events which often focused on controversial issues even though it wasn't part of the required curriculum.

To summarize, schools in which the informants were placed were loosely coupled, but within a tightly controlled technical structure. This structure had

a hierarchical order behind it (e.g., board of education, superintendent, principle, etc.); educational expectations were communicated through it; and most importantly, teachers generally took it for granted and seemed almost unaware of how it guided their beliefs and behavior.

Political Tactics and Instructional Strategies: The Informants' Response to the "World" of Teaching

While the school environment provided a systematic and socially controlled experience, it would be a mistake to assume that these informants were socialized in a uniform manner. Prior to their student teaching, they expressed beliefs such as: teachers should take an active role in determining curriculum content and instructional activities; the curriculum should not overemphasize utilitarian skills over the study of social and scientific content; subjects should be integrated; learning activities should promote critical thinking, creativity, and a desire to learn; and school should be personally meaningful to both pupils and teachers. None of these beliefs were supported by the standardized procedures and instructional programs found in the practicum sites. As our informants experienced the process of "becoming a teacher," they developed political tactics in response to the institutional press to think and behave in certain ways. Political tactics, as used in this paper, refer to both the conscious and intuitive steps these preservice teachers took as they mediated their own goals with the institutional expectations found in their field placements. The informants also developed and implemented instructional strategies that were directly related to the political tactics they employed as the semester progressed. Upon a close examination of the data, these "potentially empowered" preservice teachers employed five distinctive tactics during their initiation into the teaching profession.

Overt Compliance

This tactic was characterized by an active desire to "fit into" the existing

institutional order of the school. As might be expected, all but one of our informants used overt compliance as their primary tactic during the first week or so of student teaching. Most informants seemed to put their own beliefs "on hold" and simply tried to integrate themselves into the on-going routines found in their practicum sites. While most informants began to employ other tactics as the semester progressed, two used overt compliance as their primary tactic throughout the semester. When employing this tactic, our informants expressed interest in merely finding out "how" to teach without much concern for why they were doing what they were doing. In some cases, it seemed as if informants "looked" for reasons why they shouldn't question the on-going instructional procedures and curriculum, and their acceptance was strong enough to override their observations of pupils' negative reactions to a given type of lesson.

> The kids are really getting sick of these (recall questions and answers in their basil reading workbooks), but it's a no-win situation. I don't feel comfortable suggesting something else. The recommendation from the cooperating teacher is very important. The university supervisor said that we should blend in, be compatible, and not worry if our philosophies don't coincide because its not our place to reconstruct the whole room. The (cooperating) principal also told us that we shouldn't go in and think we have the answers. Even if some things are monotonous, I think I should go along with this situation. (Interview with Jeannie)

Overt compliance also suggested that these individuals "internally adjusted" (Lacey, 1977: 67-68) their own beliefs to comply with the values embedded within the institutional setting. For example, during her early field experience Karen created an original, comprehensive unit on occupations. However, she decided not to pursue this interest in developing curriculum during her student teaching. Nearly all of her lessons came step by step from the teacher's manuals. As the semester continued, Karen discussed her desire to "learn how to use textbooks well and to get better at anticipating students' problems with certain skills" (interview with Karen). In Karen's mind the notion of a "good" teacher shifted from one who makes basic curricular and instructional decisions to one who knows

how to use textbooks effectively. Even though she expressed beliefs reflective of "potentially empowered" teachers, her commitment to these beliefs evaporated as she worked to meet the demands found within her field placement.

Critical Compliance

The most common tactic employed by our informants was critical compliance. On the surface, it appeared as if these preservice teachers accepted the status quo. The vast majority of lessons taught by the informants came directly out of the required textbooks and teacher's manuals especially in the subject areas of reading, grammar, spelling, and math. Several of the informants were explicitly told that they had to follow these instructional programs very carefully. Although these individuals taught most of their lessons in the traditional manner, they were at the same time critical of these instructional programs.

> I don't know if grouping words by phonics it the best way to teach spelling. I learned how to spell from reading a lot. We (adults) don't learn to spell by having it on a list, writing it three times, and then having a test over it. Usually, if people read (and write) a lot they will learn to spell. (interview with Ann)

During interviews, the informants were particularly vocal about the reading program used in the schools. Most of these people had taken courses at the university which emphasized the value of a "whole language" over a "skills development" approach to reading and language arts. Although these individuals followed expected procedures as they taught various subject areas, they expressed hoped that they would be able to do things differently when eventually employed.

> I went down to Florida and had an interview with the school system where my parents live. At least I know I don't want to teach there. Everything is completely laid out for you (the teacher). The man I interviewed with stressed that they expect their teachers to follow every step outlined in their curriculum guides, and when he showed them to me they were incredibly detailed. They even told you what to say when." (interview with Donna)

Unlike overt compliance, when employing the tactic of critical compliance our informants did not "adjust" their thinking as a result of having to follow standardized procedures. Often these informants engaged in "wishful thinking"

during the semester. When not busy, they would daydream about how they would do things "if this was my class." "There are books all over the room, but they (2nd graders) never have much time to read any of them. If I had my way, I would start some type of independent reading program" (interview with Donna). However, most informants felt uncomfortable asserting these criticisms within their practicum sites. "Over spring break I observed another first grade class and started telling her (the cooperating teacher) a few of the (creative) things I observed, but I knew I had to be careful. I couldn't say too much because she might take it as criticism" (interview with Hannah). While they disagreed with what was happening within their field placements, the informants did not want to alienate their cooperating teachers and risk receiving a bad evaluation.

Accommodative Resistance

Although most of our informants "complied" with the institutional expectations of the schools, they often spoke of not wanting to become "traditional." As they participated in the on-going activities of their field placements, they began to search for some kind of workable compromise between their fantasies about helping children and being an active teacher, and the real demands of classroom life. Much of this search focused on the conflict between believing they must follow a set curriculum, method of instruction, and time schedule; and their feelings that to "really get the kids to learn" (interview with Donna) they should depart from the everyday routine. In both a conscious and intuitive manner, our informants began to seek out "freedom" within the constraints found in their practicum sites. That is, they did not automatically allow these constraints to define their social reality, but began to look for ways in which they could "resist" and perhaps have an impact upon the "world" in which they were placed. Our observations revealed three types of resistant tactics that these informants exhibited during their student teaching.

The first tactic was accommodative resistance. Shortly after most of our informants began to assume teaching responsibilities, they developed small, incidental activities that would "break up the routine in some way" (interview with Joan). Informants looked for alternatives to the drillwork that dominated classroom instruction. However, these activities did not alter the standard curriculum or nature of instruction. Rather, they reflected efforts to supplement what was being taught. For example, several informants brought in instructional "games" they had developed.

> Joan set up a learning center and introduced it to the children. It consisted of a board game that helped the children (1st/2nd graders) recognize antonyms, homonyms, and synonyms. The children were told that they could play this game after they finished their morning work. When asked why she set up this learning center Joan said, "When I was going over the reading lesson for today I noticed that the book mentioned these three concepts, and I thought this game would be good reinforcement." (observation summary of and interview with Joan)

At times, these resistant activities were worked into the weekly schedule of lessons.

> Kate brought in newspapers, divided the children (1st graders) into pairs, gave them markers, and had each group circle as many of the weekly spelling words as possible. When asked why she did this activity, she mentioned that it helped reinforce recognition of the words, was a "fun" activity that was outside the normal spelling workbook, and gave the children a chance to work in groups and learn how to cooperate. She mentioned that she "tried to work at least one enrichment activity" into spelling every week. (observation summary of and interview with Kate)

In addition to providing a "break" in the drillwork, this tactic helped the informants gain some initial trust from their cooperating teachers. By "bringing in" extra activities that did not challenge but were supportive of the traditional curriculum, informants hoped that their cooperating teachers would recognize their willingness to work hard, their creative abilities, and their desire to "get along." Once this trust was established, several informants expressed hoped they would be able to have an even greater impact upon the education within their practicum sites as the semester continued.

Resistant Alteration

As our informants spent more time in their practicum sites, they began to employ, when possible, the tactic of resistant alteration. This tactic reflected efforts to make the education found in schools more personally meaningful. When employing the tactic of resistant alteration, preservice teachers not only looked for ways to break the instructional routine of drillwork, but also made decisions concerning the content of what was being taught in their lessons. At times, the alterations made in their classrooms required relatively little planning. For example, most informants wanted to alter the writing program in their placements. They often mentioned that it focused too much on grammar, did not give pupils enough experience at actual writing, and did not motivate the children to write. In an effort to stimulate pupils' interest in writing, several individuals set up a "post office" where the children could write notes to each other, the cooperating teacher, or the informant. At the specified times during the day, individuals would be given time to write and pick up the "letters" they received from the other members of the class.

Other instructional strategies that reflected the tactic of resistant alteration required more planning and active involvement on the part of the informants. Karen felt that the chapter on nutrition in her science textbook did not address some important issues and that just reading the textbook would be boring (summary of interview with Karen). She did some research and obtained a book entitled, Good for Me (Burns, 1978) which contained several research projects that help children analyze various aspects of our food industry. Karen incorporated several of these activities into the time spent covering this chapter in their textbook. For example, the pupils (3rd graders) made bar graphs that reflected the quantity of sugar in various products and created a bulletin board of "nutritional" foods that contain large quantities of sugar; they watched

"children's" cereal commercials on television to discover how corporations try to convince people of the nutritional value of their products; and they tested (using brown paper bags) various common foods that the pupils ate during the day to discover if they contained fat (observation of Karen).

Some instructional strategies that reflected this tactic served as a substitute for the regular curriculum. Shortly after she began teaching reading groups, Kate started making alterations. "I try not to use the workbook everyday. Instead, I have them do things that will help them be creative and do some thinking on their own" (interview with Kate). The pupils (1st graders) used their workbooks on Mondays and Wednesdays. On the other days Kate used alternative materials and activities in her reading groups. The children listened to and read several "predictable" books; Kate used a special "rebus" version of No Baths for Tabatha that she had written to help teach the children in one group difficult vocabulary words; and she had the children write and "publish" their own books (observations of Kate). The tactic of resistant alteration reflected informants' attempts to "squeeze in" teaching strategies that they developed, and that they felt provided a more substantive educational experience for their pupils. This tactic represented one way in which our informants resisted the press to simply "fit into" the "norms" of teaching within their schools.

Transformative Action

At some point, most of our informants went beyond the tactic of resistant alteration and significantly transformed education within their practicum sites. During the times when the informants employed this tactic they seriously reflected upon what should be taught to their pupils (given the uniqueness of the individuals involved) and then planned and implemented an entire unit of study around a particular topic. Rather than simply being told what to do, they actively negotiated with their cooperating teachers to increase their autonomy in

order to make necessary curricular and instructional decisions.

Our informants had the most success at employing this tactic when teaching science or social studies. There was much less institutional pressure to conform to traditional routines in the these content subjects than in the "basic skill" areas. During the semester, all but one of our informants took advantage of this lack of pressure and developed and implemented at least one original unit of study. While these units covered a wide range of topics (e.g., Chinese culture, transportation systems, astronomy and space travel, Woodland Indians, occupations, nutrition, the Civil War, endangered species) and differed in the length of time taught and substance of the content, they had several things in common.

First, each of these units were unique. Decisions about the content, resources, and instructional activities were made by the informant. Some of the informants negotiated time to teach units that were not scheduled in the regular curriculum. Jeannie who originally majored in marine biology and had a particular interest in whales designed and taught a unit on endangered species. Hannah had an interest in and thought her pupils (1st graders) would enjoy learning about astronomy and space travel. Some informants developed their units in response to some pre-arranged or spontaneous activity. Kate created a unit on transportation systems because her pupils (1st graders) were scheduled to visit the airport during the semester. Joan developed a mini-unit on Dr. Seuss because there was an article about his birthday in the local newspaper.

Other informants were given topics that they should teach by their cooperating teacher, but beyond this directive these individuals negotiated the right to make content and instructional decisions. For example, Diane was asked to teach a few lessons on Abraham Lincoln since his birthday was coming soon. Her first reaction to this suggestion was somewhat negative. "I don't think they (3rd graders) should just study Lincoln. I think its important to deal with how other

people were involved during that period of time" (interview with Diane). Diane discussed her concerns with her cooperating teacher and ended up developing a unit that was still focused on Lincoln (his early life, his political life, and his assassination), but also included lessons on the Civil War, slavery (the experience of and efforts against), and the role of women during this time period (observation of Diane). Donna was asked to teach the social studies chapter that dealt with "Community Workers." This chapter focused on categorizing different types of jobs found within a typical community. Donna didn't think this content would stimulate the children's (2nd graders) interest so she developed her own unit on occupations but focused primarily on the respect that all types of workers (e.g., farmers, sanitation workers, store clerks) deserve and the wide diversity of potential careers (interview with Donna). As a result, the content of Donna's unit differed significantly from what appeared in the textbook.

Another common aspect of these units was the informants' concern for using a variety of resources. Rather than just teach from a textbook, these informants did considerable research to discover interesting resources from which their pupils could learn about the different themes explored in their units. These preservice teachers believed that using different resources would not only help children learn in their own way, but also would help the pupils learn that in most cases knowledge is socially constructed, is not absolute, and is tied to a particular resource. "One or two authors of a textbook can be wrong and could be stereotyping and discriminating against some people. It's important to do research to get different views and find out what really happened" (interview with Kate). Films, film strips, video tapes, still photographs, artifacts, guest speakers, folklore, children's literature and magazines, field trips, and non-fiction books were observed being used in these units. Some informants spent considerable time locating resources that they felt would be particularly

informative for their pupils. For example, as part of her unit's exploration of "unusual occupations" Donna located a scientist (a marine biologist from the university) who was willing to come to her class and speak to the pupils. However, Donna spent the extra time needed to locate a woman because she wanted to challenge the notion that "only men" are scientists (observation summary and interview with Donna).

Closely related to their desire to use different resources, these informants made a conscious decision to incorporate various learning activities into their units. Most of the informants stated that children learn in many different and unique ways. While some learn best from reading, other children learn best using different types of instructional activities. When planning units, they took special care to have their pupils involved in activities that reflected alternative learning styles.

> The final projects got the kids to express what they learned through writing projects, oral reports, and pictures. We had a lot of different activities because some (3rd graders) are good at writing and some are good at answering questions. We did so many different kinds of activities that everyone had an opportunity to work in the way that was best for them. One boy who was poor at reading really liked the unit because he got to participate in everything we did. Even though he is one grade level behind in reading, he worked hard, did great, and learned a lot. If it (the unit) had been based solely on reading (a textbook), he might have flunked. (interview with Diane)

During these units, pupils were observed participating in a wide range of activities including: art projects, creative and expository writing, independent and small group research, small and large group discussions, oral presentations, structured and informal experiments, puppet shows, and role plays.

Instead of emphasizing rote memorization, these activities had the children use their powers of imagination, observation, speculation, and analysis.

> Donna began the lesson by showing the children (2nd graders) different photographs of people involved in the production of milk (e.g., farmers, truckers, lab technicians, food store workers). With each photograph, the children made observations about what work these people were performing and then before showing them the next photograph she asked the children to

> speculate on what the next step in the process of milk production would be. As the discussion continued, there was an effort to have the pupils analyze the complex process involved in just getting a basic food to people's tables. (observation summary of Donna)

Efforts to "go beyond" simple memorization reflected the informants' attempts to have an impact upon their lives. Several of these individuals spoke about how they struggled to make the content of their units "relevant and meaningful."

> I showed them (6th graders) a short film strip on endangered species and afterwards we reviewed what was in the film. We made a list on the board of why animals were endangered such as hunting, pollution, and fertilizers. Gym class began, and we had to quit. Today, we read and discussed a booklet I got from the library on how animals protect themselves, like camouflage, turtles have shells, porcupines have quills, some can run fast. I put the list of things that cause animals to be endangered from the day before on the board and I said, "Okay, now look at these lists. I want you to find one thing on this list of what animals do to protect themselves that would protect them against any of these things that man does." They looked up, and it was the quietist I've ever heard this class. One kid said some animals could run faster than a hunter, but then another kid said, "Yea, but we have trucks." It was the neatest thing to see them just looking at the board. It just clicked. It was neat. (interview with Debra)

In the minds of many of our informants, creating these units gave their pupils an opportunity to get actively involved in learning and to really think about the content of what they were studying.

While most instructional strategies that reflected the tactic of transformative action were in the content areas, there were some attempts to substantively alter the teaching of the "basics." Several informants developed comprehensive writing programs during the semester.[6] Shortly after entering her placement, Hannah asked her cooperating teacher if she could set up an "Independent Reading Program." She had over two hundred books and wanted to get the children (1st graders) interested in reading, not just filling out worksheets (summary of interview with Hannah). Her cooperating teacher agreed as long as it didn't take up any of the regularly scheduled time during the day. Hannah set up the library, explained the program to the children (how to select and what activities they could get involved with when they finished a book), and began holding individual conferences with those pupils who volunteered to participate.

(Pupils had to complete their workbook quota before they could participate in Hannah's project.) In a similar effort, Debra asked if she could use children's literature to teach reading instead of the basil textbook. Her cooperating teacher supported the idea, and they both went to the principal to obtain his permission. They said the basals were holding this one group (6th graders) back, and he agreed to their plan. Debra then developed a unit around the character development and moral dilemmas portrayed in the novel, Pinballs, (observation summary of and interview with Debra).

Developing units gave these informants an opportunity to try instructional activities that they (or their pupils) had never done before.

> We are doing a lot of things that they (3rd graders) haven't done before. I've just been experimenting to see how it goes. I want them to learn how to work together, to ask questions, to write reports, to present their findings to the class. They have never done research before. I could have had them just answer questions, but I wanted them to make decisions (about what to learn) on their own. We found some discrepancies in the book, and I wanted them to realize that they had to look at more than one resource to find out what is accurate. (interview with Diane)

Mary's pupils (3rd graders) presented their final reports on Chinese culture and had a Chinese "festival" which was filmed for a local television show. Several of the pupils were then interviewed by the reporter on what they had learned during this unit. Hannah got a chance to set up learning centers that integrated all of the subject areas (e.g., math, art, science, social studies, music, reading, writing) into her unit on astronomy and space travel.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the informants' efforts to employ the tactic of transformative action was that none of these activities were required as part of their student teaching practicum. Informants were primarily evaluated on how well they "moved" children through the standardized curriculum in a smooth, quiet, and orderly fashion. While some of the cooperating teachers and university supervisors tolerated and others actively supported the informants' transformative teaching strategies, initiating such activities was not considered necessary.

Although time consuming and difficult, developing original units of study gave these informants a sense of "ownership" and power that typical beginning teachers fail to experience. When asked what they had learned from student teaching, several informants responded in ways similar to Donna.

> The most important thing is that I learned to be creative. I decided what should be taught and did a lot of running around for my careers unit. I called people up and planned field trips, but it made me feel good because I was being creative. Even though I took some ideas from other people, I put it (the unit) together in my own unique way and made decisions about what activities would be best for this group of kids. So in the end it became my unit. That makes me feel creative. (interview with Donna)

By employing the tactic of transformative action, these informants left student teaching with a sense that they could have a meaningful impact upon their chosen professional "world."

Summary

As previously stated, the findings of recent field studies have mentioned the presence of preservice teachers who are reflected and active in their approach to teaching, but this research has not provided many details concerning their experience. This study has begun to give us some insight into the way in which these particular individuals socialized themselves into the teaching profession. This process was complex and multi-dimensional. Most informants employed each of the previously described tactics during their student teaching. Perhaps due to the fact that they questioned traditional school practices, they were involved in a difficult process of working through their relationship to their own idealism. At times, they "let go" of their ideals and internally adjusted their beliefs in order to comply to the institutional norms and expectations found in their field placements. Several informants mentioned that they were attracted to a whole language approach to teaching reading and language arts; however, as they took responsibility for reading lessons, they began to mention how the basil textbooks "weren't so bad" or that there were "some good parts" to these instructional

programs. At other times, the informants' idealism was used as a way to evaluate themselves. For one reason or another, they often taught in ways that didn't reflect their idealistic conceptions of education. This judging often resulted in feelings of failure. Several informants mentioned their inability to "reach" certain children, to discipline in a manner that allowed pupils freedom, or to be as creative as they had hoped. Their inability to implement these goals caused them great distress. Finally, some informants used their idealism as a guide for their own professional development. During those times when they felt that they had had an impact upon the classroom in which they were placed, they gained confidence in their ability to put their "beliefs into practice." If they fell short of their own expectations, they did not get overly discouraged. Although these informants expressed frustration and disappointment in the gap between what they originally hoped they would be able to do during their student teaching and the lack of autonomy they experienced in the real world of schools, they recognized that it is always difficult to be idealistic, and they expressed hoped that as inservice teachers they would be able to come closer to implementing their ideals.

Towards a Theory of Empowered Teaching

One of the purposes of social science is to develop theories that help us understand social reality. Pinar (1975: 391) states:

> Theory (development), at least in part, becomes the rendering of experience into words, the translation of the private "lebenswelt" (human experience) into public language. It is....the translation of practice into theory.

Unfortunately, as Bowers (1982) notes, too often educators have been overly dependent upon abstract, mental constructions in developing their theoretical understanding of our social world. This dependence has "prevented them from testing their theory against the phenomenological world of people involved in concrete social and cultural relationships" (Bowers, 1982: 546). One of the values

of interpretive field study is that close examination of a singular setting can yield insights into the subtleties of social reality often missed in more generalized, quantitative research. As previously mentioned, the findings of this study are, in part, presented in an effort to illuminate the theoretical construct of empowerment as it relates to teaching; thus providing a basis for further discussion. Ideally, empowered teaching would result in a significantly altered education from current practice. However, there are several ways in which empowerment can be conceptualized.

Oppositional Behavior

One way to conceptualize empowerment is to focus on the oppositional behavior of individuals. From this perspective workers' actions against the control of "scientific management" (Burawoy, 1979) or teachers' resistance against the technical control embedded in prepackaged instructional programs (Apple, 1983) becomes an illustration of empowerment. Given this orientation, our informants clearly moved towards becoming empowered teachers during their student teaching. They made numerous attempts to resist the standardized teaching practices found in their practicum sites. However, oppositional behavior alone does not automatically result in an empowered education. As Giroux (1983) points out, this focus ignores the crucial element of human intentions. One might question whether the tactic of accommodative resistance (see page 13) actually leads to a significant change in educational practice. For example, Debra expressed a strong commitment to validating her children's (6th graders) ideas. She was critical of many of the textbooks for being "impersonal." She often mentioned that teachers should promote critical thinking among pupils, and they should make the content meaningful to the pupils' lives (summary of interviews with Debra). Debra had considerable talent at leading group discussions and was observed implementing her beliefs through classroom dialogue. Rather than simply conducting typical

"question and answer" sessions on information in the textbooks, she purposefully allowed the pupils to "get off track" and "bring their own experiences into the discussions" (interview with Debra).

> The class was learning about major diseases, and the textbook related a story about a boy who allowed smallpox to be injected into him as part of the effort to develop a vaccine. The pupils began to discuss the ethics of using human beings as "guinea pigs" for medical research. There was active debate among the pupils, and they began to discuss treatment of AIDS and cancer by using human subjects. After considerable time past on this topic, Debra brought the discussion back to the information in the textbook. (observation summary of Debra)

Based upon observations of these class discussions, one might assume that Debra's actions reflected the tactic of resistant alteration (see page 15); however, when her evaluation procedures were examined, her concern for incorporating pupils' ideas and promoting their critical thinking were not evident. Exams and other assignments were based strictly on the recall of information presented in the textbooks. When asked why she put so much effort into leading substantive discussions when they weren't part of her evaluation of the pupils, she stated,

> To me, that's (incorporating pupils' experiences into discussions of content found in the textbooks) more of a motivator. It's not my ultimate goal. It's the way I motivate them to learn (memorize) the content. If they can see how it (the content of a given lesson) relates to them, I think it makes them more willing to learn it. (interview with Debra)

Like other instructional strategies that reflected the tactic of accommodative resistance, Debra's talent to lead substantive discussions was used primarily to support the traditional curriculum and process of learning. One cannot assume that any oppositional practice will result in a substantively altered education.

Human Intentions

Recognizing the importance of the relationship between intentions and behavior is a valuable step in developing a theory of empowerment. It is also necessary to clarify our notions of what constitutes "positive" intentions and actions. A number of educators have used the concept of emancipation as a useful criterion by which to assess empowered teaching. Does one's teaching lead to the

social, intellectual, and ethical liberation of one's self and his/her pupils? In answering this question, some educators have focused on educational theory and practice. These individuals assert that traditional teaching/learning strategies have produced a rigid, socially controlled environment for both teachers and pupils (e.g., Franklin, 1986; Gitlin, 1983; Kretovics, 1986). As a result, both teachers and pupils have suffered from a "hidden curriculum" that communicates messages such as: 1) teachers and pupils are basically incapable of deciding what is worthwhile to teach and learn, 2) recall is the highest form of intellectual endeavors, 3) one's own ideas are not to be trusted or valued over information written by "experts," 4) knowledge is concrete and there is always a "right" answer to any given question, and 5) passive acceptance of is a more desirable reaction to knowledge than active criticism (Postman and Weingartner, 1969). It is argued that these and other "hidden messages" tend to weaken teachers' and pupils' ability to reflect upon their own lives and the world in which we live. One criteria for conceptualizing empowered teaching could be to assess the extent an individual's intentions and actions challenge these types of hidden messages.

When employing the tactics of resistant alteration (see page 15) and transformative action (see page 16), the informants in this study taught in ways that reflected the above criteria. In particular, they rejected the narrowly defined role of teaching as only the management of predetermined instructional programs. When creating their units, they seriously questioned what was worth teaching/learning. Through various learning activities they consciously tried to encourage pupils' creativity and thoughtfulness. The informants' work at developing original curriculum was similar to writing a documentary or an article on a given topic. It required interest in the subject, intellectual ability to reflect upon what content should be explored, motivation and skill to research relevant information, energy to discover interesting resources from which children

could learn, talent to implement learning activities that encouraged the intellectual involvement of the pupils, and the ability to organize the findings of this work into a form that children could understand and enjoy. Ideally, this type of teaching/learning would contribute to teachers' and pupils' collective empowerment and emancipation.

Others suggest that the notion of emancipation must be tied to the content of what is taught rather than educational theory or the way it is taught. "The determination of the critical thrust of a course must be posed and answered with reference to content, not form" (Elshtain, 1978: 299). The subject matter of a given course or unit of study will always contain implications that reflect one or more social ideologies. A number of educators have promoted the role of content for raising pupils' social consciousness (e.g., Wolf-Wasserman and Hutchinson, 1978).

While our informants expressed commitment to the idea that education should promote human rights and help children understand themselves, other people, and the world in which we live, for all but one informant these ideals were relatively vague. Nevertheless, the informants made several attempts to address human rights issues while they taught. Most informants consciously considered groups of people traditionally ignored in public school curriculum. For example, Kate included a lesson on Amelia Earhart, the first woman to pilot a plane solo across the Atlantic Ocean, in her unit on transportation. Hannah showed a video tape and lead a discussion on the role of women in the exploration of space. Diane's unit on Abraham Lincoln explored the contribution of black people such as Harriet Tubman in freeing the slaves. While these efforts reflected a sensitivity not found in many teachers a short time ago, their understanding of and willingness to address complex social issues in their units of study was not extensively evident. For example, Ann consciously included the contributions of women and

children into her unit on the traditional culture of Woodland Indians, but did not study the genocide committed against these people. Donna's unit on occupations examined sex-role stereotyping in the job market, but it did not explore women's struggles for equal rights in the workplace.

Only one of the informants expressed a relatively sophisticated social/political philosophy during interviews. Most seemed politically naive. Some educators might point to our informants' lack of ideological sophistication as reason for their inability to truly empower themselves or their pupils. Since many of the educators who have advocated an emancipatory role of education have based their analysis of schooling within a neo-Marxist tradition, it might be implied that empowered teachers would need to be aware of and committed to this particular ideology.[7]

Most informants came from moderately conservative, suburban or rural backgrounds. During their university education they had been exposed to radical analyses of society in both their liberal arts and education coursework. However, this exposure was not extensive and many of their courses reinforced values and ideas that reflected a more conservative perspective. However, all of our informants were aware of the woman's movement in the United States and while a couple of individuals felt it "had gone too far," the majority of our informants recognized its value for promoting equal rights and opportunities for all people. During interviews, the informants expressed a mix of traditionally conservative and liberal attitudes depending upon the given issue. None of our informants employed a highly sophisticated social/political ideology in the development of their units, and their understanding of the relationship between education and society at large was limited.

While developing a progressive understanding of our natural and social world would most likely improve a teacher's effectiveness at being empowered, there is

danger in defining empowerment in ideological terms. There are many individuals and governments in our world today who are knowledgeable of and committed to a particular ideology (e.g., Marxism, Capitalism, Democracy, Christianity, Islam, Judaism) and have little, if any, regard for basic human rights and liberties. It is easy to use any ideology, no matter how "emancipatory" it goals, as a justification for dogma and oppression. If being committed to a specifically defined ideology is a necessary criteria for recognizing the emancipatory potential of teaching, then few, if any, of our informants' teaching would be considered empowering. If, on the other hand, our conception of emancipation emphasizes educational theory and practice that encourages active intellectual involvement among children and a commitment to an unspecified notion of human rights, then most of our informants exhibited potential for empowered teaching.

Social/Institutional Context

Even if we can assume that one's oppositional behavior and intentions are positive, the notion of an empowered teaching needs to be seen in light of realistic possibilities within a given social context. To what degree does change have to occur before it reflects a genuinely altered education? Most of the resistant tactics used by the informants actually changed very little of the curriculum and instructional procedures found in the practicum sites. The forces of technical control found within the schools could not be ignored or "wish away." Informants often mentioned the pressure to "get through" the daily quota of workbook pages and expressed frustration that this rigid schedule kept them from doing things they felt were of more educational value for their pupils. All but one informant complained about the lack of time they had to accomplish all they wanted to finish. Several informants mentioned that they would follow the standardized textbooks, simply because they couldn't be creative six hours a day, five days a week. "I really don't have the time to figure out how to teach every

(reading) skill in a different (creative) way. I know that sounds like a cop-out, but it's true" (interview with Hannah). As a result, these informants had to pick and choose when they would exert the extra effort to plan and implement more substantive lessons. Even though the informants were critical of many parts of the standardized instructional programs used in the practicum sites, one might question whether the most commonly employed tactic, critical compliance, really offers any potential for substantive change. For example, of all the informants, Hannah and Mary expressed the strongest commitment to changing the traditional education found in schools. However, they both expressed doubts about what could be possible given the constraints found in most schools. They were not sure how much autonomy they would be able to assume even after they became inservice teachers (summary of interviews with Hannah and Mary). While it is impossible to know what will happen in the future, it is important not to romanticize the resistant tactics of these informants and thereby ignore the very real constraints that may influence even these potentially empowered future teachers.

On the other hand, it is also important not to overemphasize people's inability to affect social reality. Given the low status and lack of power student teachers traditionally have, the efforts of these informants to have an impact upon their practicum sites are noteworthy. Even though short in duration, the informants implemented several instructional strategies that substantively altered the educational experience of the pupils in these schools. It must be remembered that these informants were novice teachers. They were just beginning to explore the possibilities of their chosen profession. For example, (partially as a result of our interviews) by the end of the semester, Debra started developing evaluation activities that would incorporate her pupils' personal knowledge and reflective thinking, rather than just rote memorization of content. Diane often discussed the importance of getting children to think critically, but

wasn't sure how to reach this goal. "I'm just beginning to think critically myself" (interview with Diane). Throughout the semester, Diane tried several different strategies (e.g., group discussions, research reports, collaborative writing lessons) to encourage her pupils (3rd graders) to be more thoughtful but was not completely satisfied that she was successful (observation summary of and interview with Diane).

Perhaps our conception of an individual who is "empowered" is flawed. Based upon the findings of this study, being empowered is not a static way of teaching. There is no clear dividing line between empowered and non-empowered teaching. Rather it might be helpful to think of empowerment as a process, rather than as a concrete state of mind or style of practice. There is possibly no such person as an empowered teacher. Instead, there are only those individuals who make a decision to struggle towards becoming empowered as they participate in their professional lives. That is, they decide not to merely fit into institutional norms, but to have a humane impact upon the "world" in which they live. Once this decision is made, they struggle to overcome (or avoid) biographical, institutional, and social constraints that hinder their progress. Recognizing the limitations of what can be done within a given context does not mean that as human beings we are unable to alter present circumstances. Although broad, sweeping changes will not be implemented within classrooms until our society as a whole decides that it wants a more substantive education for our children, the work of a few individuals should not be completely discounted. While the day-to-day life within these practicum sites did not significantly change under the direction of our informants, at the end of the semester, most were still committed to struggling towards becoming an empowered teacher.

Conclusions and Implications

Space does not allow for a full discussion of the implications of this

study's findings and theoretical discussion. However, for those educators interested in promoting the empowerment of future teachers, a few issues can be addressed given these findings. Contrary to the common perception that professional preparation coursework is irrelevant to teachers, these informants made numerous references to ideas and teaching strategies that they were exposed to during their pre-student teaching courses and early field experiences. For example, as a result of their methods courses in language arts, most of these individuals made a concerted effort to implement more substantive writing lessons into their student teaching experience. Many of the actual activities that these informants implemented in their practicum sites (e.g., mail boxes, poetry writing, authors' circles, authors' journals) came directly from these courses. Each of the informants stated that the social studies methods course they took made them re-think many of their views of education (e.g., its purpose, the role of the teacher, conception of knowledge) and significantly increased their willingness and talent to design original units of study. It seemed that in the case of several informants, their decision to struggle towards being empowered was made as a result of their preparation coursework. If developed to promote serious reflection upon children, teaching, learning, and the role that education plays within our society and if preservice teachers are exposed to viable alternatives rather than just platitudes about "being creative," then the findings of this study suggest that university coursework can play a significant and empowering role in the preparation of future teachers.

As one might expect, the nature of the field placement within which preservice teachers are placed also play a vital role in the socialization of potentially empowered individuals. As previously mentioned, a few of the cooperating teachers were actively supportive of the informants' efforts to employ resistant tactics. Whenever possible, these cooperating teachers gave their

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student teachers opportunities to experiment with different curriculum and instructional strategies. The informants placed in these practicum sites mentioned this support as an important element in their professional growth. On the other hand, some of the informants were placed in sites that were extremely restrictive. In these placements, the informants were given very little time to digress from basic drillwork in the four subjects of reading, grammar, spelling, and math. For example, Hannah often complained that many pupils in her class were not given any time to participate in the independent reading program she established. Often her lessons on creative writing were cancelled at the last moment by her cooperating teacher so that the pupils could "finish their workbooks," and frequently her lessons on astronomy and space travel were interrupted in order to take one or more children out of the class so that they could complete their reading workbooks. Towards the last quarter of the semester, Hannah became discouraged due to the lack of autonomy she had in her placement, and she seriously considered whether her decision to pursue education as a career was correct (observation summary of and interviews with Hannah).

Popular conceptions of a "good" cooperating teacher usually emphasize the teaching ability of the given individual. That is, the best cooperating teachers are "master" teachers who can demonstrate "the way to do it." The findings of this study question this often taken for granted orientation. If helping preservice teachers become more empowered is a worthwhile goal, then it is less important to find "master" teachers and more important to find cooperating teachers who support an experimental approach to student teaching and who can facilitate the ideas of novice teachers.

Finally, the findings suggest that preparation programs need to give more attention to helping preservice teachers learn the "politics of teaching" (Kohl, 1976: 119-163). Several informants criticized the two reading methods courses they

had for not preparing them to use basil textbooks effectively. Some instructors ignored the use of a "skill development" approach and only focused on a "whole language" approach to reading in their courses. Since none of the schools allowed their teachers to use a whole language approach to teach reading, the informants felt somewhat betrayed. There are strong historical, social, and institutional forces that maintain the status quo. University instructors who wish to advocate an alternative education cannot simply tell preservice teachers that good teachers "do it differently." It is not enough to demonstrate alternative teaching strategies without also examining ways to realistically implement them within traditional schools. Preparation programs interested in helping preservice teachers become empowered need to seriously address issues such as relating to individuals in authority positions; dealing with institutional traditions and expected norms; proposing and initiating changes in ways that don't needlessly alienate other people, sustaining change once it begins, and developing a base of support among pupils, other school personnel, and community members. Most the our informants were struggling with these issues during their student teaching experience. However, there was little opportunity to share their concerns with other student teachers, faculty members, or cooperating teachers. A couple of their preparation courses did touch upon these issues, but these discussions were rare and not very useful according to most of the informants. In addition to exploring the methods and foundations of educational practice, preparation programs need to systematically address the fact that novice teachers enter a pre-arranged institutional world, and to be effective, one must have some knowledge of how institutions work and how one can best "work the system."

This study has begun to give us some insight into the socialization of potentially empowered preservice teachers. The findings have provided a basis upon which several issues could be discussed. Too often, we forget that as much

(if not more) can be learned about a given phenomenon from examining the unique rather than the "average" individual. However, our understanding of these unique individuals is still extremely weak. Do other programs have potentially empowered teachers? Do these individuals develop similar tactics as our informants while participating in student teaching? Are these individuals rare exceptions or could most preservice teachers make the decision to struggle towards being empowered? In what ways do organizations, social policy, and tradition hinder or facilitate the empowerment of teachers? In what ways can an individual have an impact upon a given institutional world? If we are to create preparation programs that support an empowering orientation to teacher education, then more research is needed.

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Notes

1
Not all of these individuals have used the term "empowered." For example, Alan Tom describes these teachers as "moral craftspeople;" Henry Giroux and Joseph Kretovics use the term, "transformative intellectuals;" and Ken Zeichner and George Posner have referred to these individuals as "reflective practitioners." Despite the difference in terminology, these individuals' descriptions are similar to the description of "empowered teachers" used in the text of this paper.

2
This instrument contained forty seven items assessing six major areas of beliefs along the following continuum:

- Teacher role: passive to active
- Teacher-pupil relationships: custodial to self discipline
- Knowledge and curriculum: concrete frame to intersubjective frame
- Student diversity: negative to positive
- School-community relationship: distant to integrated
- School-society relationship: reproductive to transformative

For a discussion of the internal validity of the TBI, see Martin & Wedman (1986).

3
For a more detailed description of this course see Goodman (1986).

4
Interviews were also conducted with cooperating teachers and principals, university supervisors, the director of student teaching, and the director of undergraduate education within the school of education.

5
All proper names are fictitious.

6
Informants were told that the system-wide competency test this year included a writing sample from each child. As a result, the informants were given considerable freedom to develop a "writing program" that would "go beyond" simple grammar.

7
There are, of course, many educators who promote the emancipatory role of schools from different perspectives other than Marxism. See Mazza's (1982) for a detailed study of this literature.

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Appendix A

Representative Informants' Responses to the Study

I found your paper to be extremely interesting. I enjoyed reading about my fellow student teachers' experiences as well as my own. More important, however, was your accurate observations and analysis.

I am anxious to show this paper to my parents as it completely describes the process involved in becoming a teacher at ____. We were taught to go beyong the basics, to learn how to think. Unfortunately, as the paper mentions, it is sometimes difficult to implement our ideas in the schools.

I found the term "empowered" to be very appropriate. The description you gave was extremely informative. I feel honored that I could be termed a potentially empowered teacher. That is certainly what I am striving to become!

I sincerely hope that this paper will have some kind of an impact somewhere. Since school has started I have been substituting and watching. After refecting again on what I know and can do, I honestly feel that I am part of a small group who are willing to make changes. I have yet to be in a group or individual situation where I feel comfortable talking about my ideas. I've tried, but I have been told that, "There isn't much time for things like that." The school system that I'm in is very structured and "by the book." I have found it difficult to even bring my ideas up with principals and the superintendent. They listen and look at what I've done and say, "That's nice." They never want to go into detail about it. It really gets frustrating! When I received my copy of the study, I thought that this would be something that I could talk about during an interview, but I guess I have to feel out the situation first. Some principals are probably more receptive than others. I'm almost glad to be moving, so that I can get into another school system.

As for myself, I'm proud to be part of this paper and to be titled an "empowered" teacher. I know that I can not be one who simply follows the textbook. Teaching is much more than that, and it's really a shame that others do not realize that.

My favorite part of the paper was the section on "Political Tactics..." because it clearly states the methods we used, which enables me to have more ideas on how to "go around" the system, and implement my teaching style. It's sad to think that for something that would improve education, one has to "go around" or "beat" the system. Hopefully, one of these days, the situation will change.

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